

## **Peace Building Diplomacy: Japan's Contribution to Sri Lanka's Positive Peace Building and Development**

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#### **1 Origins of Peacebuilding**

The formal origins of peacebuilding can be traced to United Nations Organization (UN) (Paris, 2004: 13). The most famous definition of peacebuilding is *An Agenda for Peace* issued by UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992. He defines peacebuilding as "actions to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict" (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). In the aftermath of World War II, the UN was created with a very high target of 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war' and to achieve that object by maintaining peace and security in the world. The preamble to the UN charter states "to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security." Therefore when the cold war developed the UN carried out its main security activity of maintaining world peace by its peacekeeping work.

The first major peacekeeping operation of the UN, took place in Egypt when Britain, France and Israel invaded that country over the Suez crisis. The UN peacekeeping force to Egypt was established on 5 November 1956 under the General Assembly ground breaking initiative 'Uniting for Peace' procedure. The Uniting for Peace Resolution was passed in 1950 (UN, GA Res.1950). It provided the main pathway for the UN to address issues of war and conflict and to maintain peace unencumbered by veto during the cold war. Since 1950 UN General Assembly and the Security Council both used the Uniting for Peace Procedure in different contexts for range of different purposes over the years.

The mandate of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) to Egypt provided a template for UN peacekeeping operations during the cold war era or its first phase in UN peacekeeping work. The underlining principle of UN peacekeeping was host state's consent. The peacekeeping troops were also prohibited from use of force (except in self-defense). It was peacekeeping as a distinct form of third-party intervention designed to control violence. In the writings of the UN, this period is usually referred to as 'traditional' or 'classical' period of UN peacekeeping (Lowe et.al. 2010: 177-179).

When Cold War ended UN was entrusted with peacebuilding since there were too many inter and intra conflicts neither superpower had any interest of getting involved after the decline in tensions between them. They were conflicts in which superpower rivalry was absent. Therefore an opportunity arose for the UN to play a constructive role in interstate conflicts. From a primarily military activity of peacekeeping on ceasefire monitoring in the Cold War era UN undertook peacebuilding, an activity that commenced when fighting has stopped. Peacebuilding by definition is a post-conflict enterprise. Hence peacebuilding operations are deployed to consolidate peace in countries that have recently experienced civil conflict, and where hostilities have already ended (Paris, 2004: 38).

Peacebuilding work of the UN began in 1989 when UN field operation not only observed a ceasefire but helped to establish political institutions within a sovereign state in its first major peacebuilding mission in Namibia. From that time post-conflict peace-building developed into a big industry (Paris, 2004: 13). The major UN peacebuilding efforts were in Namibia (1989), Nicaragua (1989), Angola (1991), Cambodia (1991), El Salvador (1991), Mozambique (1992), Liberia (1993), Rwanda (1993), Bosnia (1995), Croatia (1995), Guatemala (1997), East Timor (1997), Kosovo (1999), Sierra Leone (1999), Congo (1999), Liberia (2003), Cote d'Ivoire (2004) and Sudan (2005) (Lowe et.al. 2010: Appendix 1: UN Peacekeeping operations 1945 - 2006).

Issuing a policy statement in the backdrop of end of Cold War, Boutros- Ghali argued that 'an opportunity [had] been regained to achieve the great objectives of the Charter' (Boutros-Ghali, 1992) and that the organization 'must never again be crippled as it was in the era that now passed' (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). He further suggested that peacekeeping might have to expand and develop in qualitatively new ways. He further clarified the post-conflict peacebuilding of the UN in the *An Agenda for Development* 1994, *Supplement to An Agenda of Peace* in 1995 and *An Agenda for Democratization* in 1996.

The period of peacekeeping in *An Agenda for Peace* saw a huge expansion of UN peacebuilding activities in numbers, scope and complexity, by 1994 with over 17 missions around the world with a budget of US \$4 Billion (Lowe et.al 2010: 188). With the surge in demand for UN in peacebuilding and severe strains on the organization's limited capacity, a panel was appointed in 2000 to assess the work, chaired by Lakdhar Brahimi. Their report acknowledged that UN is politically and structurally ill equipped for large-scale peace enforcement action. Since the publication of the Report, Brahimi successfully argued for a more modest role for the UN mission to Afghanistan in 2001 (Lowe et. al. 2010: 199). By 2003 the demand for UN in peacebuilding was on the rise again. In 2006 UN Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office was established.

Following the example of United Nations, the other international and regional agents of post-conflict peacebuilding emerged. Among them, one of the most powerful actors is the World Bank through its monetary funding. UN as well as all others follow same peacebuilding model. That is the liberal peacebuilding model committed to promotion of liberal values and institutions through liberal-democratic political institutions, human rights, effective and good governance, and economic liberalization. In this model no attention is paid to local voices and alternatives. As it turned out in most cases these rapid processes without due reference to local conditions generated destabilizing side effects that endangered the very peace that such policies were intended to strengthen (Paris, 2004: 235). This universal liberalism was seen in many countries including in Sri Lanka where there is formal liberal and democratic institutions in place, as highly interventionist and is capable of applying double standards. For example while supporting war on terror Western powers such as US and UK have questioned the government of Sri Lanka's (GoSL) conduct in relation to war which was fought to defend the liberal values. The liberal peacebuilding model applied universally has not been great success in many places. In Sri Lanka too rather than relying on the liberal peacebuilding model for positive peace it is worthwhile to investigate liberal peacebuilding in hybrid peace governance where importance of ownership of local society (Shinoda, 2012: 17) would be considered. This is where we can take lessons from Japan's post-war peacebuilding endeavour.

## 2 Japan's culture of Peace/Peace Diplomacy and Peacebuilding Diplomacy

Japan emerged from the destruction of World War II vowing never to resort to violence ever again. As a nation they came together determined in building a culture of peace. The new constitution promulgated on November 3, 1946 included an article which specifically made renunciation of war. This is article 9 of the constitution which is commonly known as the peace clause of the Japanese constitution. Article 9 of the Constitution renounces wars as follows:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the

Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized (Article 9, Chapter II, The Constitution of Japan, since 1946).

The word "peace" appears frequently in the Constitution and Japanese people have taken the word seriously as a peace loving nation for the past 66 years. The Japanese people are proud of the Constitution, especially Article 9. Japan does not maintain Armed forces such as an Army, Navy or Air Force. They have instead, a Self Defense Force (SDF) which is ultra modern with all capabilities of all three military forces but restricted to serve only in Japan. SDF cannot be deployed overseas due to the above constitutional condition.

Peacebuilding together with post war reconstruction began in earnest in the aftermath of WW II. The atomic war devastated Hiroshima city can be taken as a case study of peacebuilding that took place in Japan. Hiroshima also reflects the reality of peacebuilding at the end of war (Shinoda, 2008). One could say that peacebuilding as a national policy began at local and national level in Japan soon after WW II. Today, Japanese people believe that peace is too important to be left to the state. Japan's peace is a citizen-centered peace culture. Hence Peace Museums and Monuments, and Peace festivals in all forms are very much part of people's life today. Japan's peace culture was successful in defining a unique feature in Japan's diplomatic relations with the world, peacebuilding diplomacy.

Japan is the first country in Asia that rose as a strong economic power peacefully. Highlighting Japan's Peace Diplomacy as a nation committed to peace in the height of Cold War, the Japanese government issued policy document in 1975 which stated that Japan pledge itself and to the world to remain a nation committed to peace under its peace constitution. Therefore Japan will take the basic stance that it will not use force as a means of settling international disputes, will devote itself to peaceful diplomacy and will make positive efforts for the achievement of world peace (Japan Blue-book, 1975). Japanese Foreign Minister Masayoshi Ohira (who later became the Prime Minister) in 1964 discussed Japan's Diplomacy for Peace in an article written to the *International Affairs* (1964).

Developing on the foundations of Peace diplomacy in the 1970's Japan formulated its unique peacebuilding diplomacy in early 2000. Prior to that, Japan has been interested in playing a leading role in Asia. Articulating Japan's diplomatic relations with the South East Asian countries the Prime Minister Takao Fukuda wanted Japan to actively cooperate in reducing poverty and preventing conflicts in

South East Asia. Thus emerged what is later became known as the Fukuda Doctrine which outlined three basic principles of Japanese diplomatic policy towards Southeast Asia.

The three principles enunciated by then Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda in Manila in August 1977 were:

- 1 Japan is committed to peace, and rejects the role of a military power;
- 2 Japan will do its best to consolidate the relationship of mutual confidence and trust based on “heart-to-heart” understanding with the nations of Southeast Asia;
- 3 Japan will cooperate positively with Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) while aiming at fostering a relationship based on mutual understanding with the countries of Indochina and will thus contribute to the building of peace and prosperity throughout Southeast Asia (MOFA, Japan 1977).

Thus in the realm of foreign relations of Japan, Fukuda achieved greater success in formulating a distinctive diplomacy contributing to peace in South East Asia which became known as the Fukuda Doctrine. Prime Minister Fukuda was also instrumental in concluding the 1978 treaty of peace and friendship with China.

By 2002 Japan was very specific on its style of peacebuilding, emphasizing on diplomacy and overseas development assistance (ODA). Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi addressing a gathering in Singapore 2002 proposed a new role for Japan in International Relations that goes beyond a one-dimensional emphasis on economics, in cooperation with the countries of ASEAN, to make contribution to ensure regional stability. That is to strengthen cooperation for the consolidation of peace and nationbuilding in countries suffering from conflicts. Japan identified East Timor, Mindanao, Aceh and Sri Lanka as the countries in South and South East Asia that would benefit under the new pillar of Japan’s international cooperation. (Peng Er 2009: 91)

It is easy to trace Japan’s peacebuilding concept and its unique features since post-WW II values of pacifism, emphasis on development aid and ensuring of human security (Peng Er: 2009: 15). Japan has been actively contributing to peacebuilding for nearly 50 years now. That Japan must play a responsible role in the international community as a “Peace Fostering Nation” to contribute to peace and prosperity of the world is what the Government of Japan, has been advocating recently.

In January 2008, Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura expressed Japan’s determination to peacebuilding in a policy speech titled “Japan: Builder of Peace” as follows:

I would like to see my country become a focal point for the world to gather knowledge and experience in peacebuilding and to nurture peacebuilding professionals. At the United Nations, Japan is fulfilling the duties of chair of the newly established Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Japan also contributed funds amounting to twenty million dollars to the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). ... These contributions demonstrate that Japan regards the work of the Commission as significant and essential. ... Japan is a country that does its best for peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is a job at which Japan excels (MOFA, Japan 2008).

### 3 Japan's Peacebuilding diplomacy and sustainable positive peace in Sri Lanka

Since independence foreign aid helped GoSL in many development programs recording impressive results in education and health sectors. In literacy, Sri Lanka is ranked 32 in par with most developed countries (World Development Report, 2011). As one of the first developing countries which promoted universal free healthcare and education it was development success story until the conflict destabilized the development projects and the economy. From late 1970's Sri Lanka followed a program of economic liberalization and Japan was one of Sri Lanka's top donors for these projects. Until early 1990 the donors directly dealt with the state in a top down delivery mode of development aid.

Since the end of Cold War donors promoted foreign aid as a tool for conflict reduction and post-conflict peacebuilding. Widening the scope from economic policies to promote conflict resolution, conditions were attached to foreign aid. During the conflict in Sri Lanka, especially during the period 2000 - 2005 donor policy supported what the GoSL wanted at the time, to facilitate a peace process.

The western donor policies towards GoSL are generally driven by the liberal peacebuilding model, international interests and agendas (more than) the needs and concerns of the country itself. (Goodhand, et. al. 2011: 161) This has resulted in unrealistic expectations that have led the donors themselves to state that liberal peacebuilding model has failed so far. Also these donors started avoiding the state and channeling their aid through non-governmental organizations and their agencies in the country.

Unlike the western donors and aid agencies, Japan did not choose to avoid the state. Japan has continually provided aid in support of domestic state policy. Japan's peacebuilding diplomacy is to work with governments in its aid policy rather than outside government mechanism thereby respecting the national sovereignty and avoids foreign interference.

Although Japan had expressed its concerns about the conflict, Japan has in the true sense of peacebuilding diplomacy avoided getting embroiled in political matters until 2002. It is Koizumi administration that ventured into peacebuilding in South Asia (Afghanistan since Bonn 2001 and Sri Lanka in 2002). Japan has been Sri Lanka's friend and ally since independence. Japan's good will towards Sri Lanka stems among other things from the stand GoSL took at San Francisco Peace Conference articulated by J. R. Jayawardene citing the Buddhist principle of forgiveness. The Buddhist influence and Asian culture made it possible both GoSL and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to easily accept Japan as a peacebuilder.

Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda was also very keen on facilitating Japan's role in peacebuilding in Sri Lanka. He established an advisory group led by Yashushi Akashi to examine Japan's role on peacekeeping and peacebuilding. To Sri Lanka's advantage Fukuda was also the Chairman of the Diet friendship association of Sri Lanka and visited the country many times. (Peng Er. 2009: 96). When he became the Prime Minister of Japan, following his father's (Takeo Fukuda) footsteps in Japan's diplomatic relations with South East Asia he too insisted on Japan leading the way to create a regional mechanism that would solve territorial disputes and boost confidence among neighbours

(*Economist*, Nov. 2007). As Prime Minister, he initiated a program in December 2007 to invite a total of 500 young Sri Lankans of different ethnicities to visit Japan over five years to learn about local governance, build mutual confidence and promote peace (Peng Er. 2009: 96).

On 25<sup>th</sup> October 2002, Japan appointed its former UN diplomat Yasushi Akashi, Japan's representative for peacebuilding and rehabilitation and reconstruction in Sri Lanka. Akashi came to be known as the special envoy for the peace process. He was the principal advisor to the Sub-committee on immediate humanitarian and rehabilitation needs in the North and East. While establishing links between the two warring parties GoSL and the LTTE, Akashi sought international support for the Sri Lanka peace process by meeting with officials in US, India, Norway and the UN. In Japan Akashi was also appointed as Chairman of the advisory group on international cooperation for peace (Peng Er 2009: 97) strengthening Japan peace-building diplomacy.

Japan hosted the sixth round of peace talks between GoSL and the LTTE in Hakone. Despite the setback in the peace process, the Tokyo conference (June 2003) was held. The largest pledges came from the three largest donors to Sri Lanka, Japan, Asian Development Bank, and the World Bank, each pledging US \$1 billion each and a total of US \$ 4.5 billion (Goodhand et.al. 2011: 159) over a period of four years from 2003 - 2006. In 2007 Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi's the first foreign minister of an industrialized country to visit conflict-torn Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka, stated that "Official development assistance is indispensable to consolidating the peace process" (*Economist* Nov. 2007).

When President Mahinda Rajapakse visited Japan in December 2007 he expressed gratitude for Japan's assistance to Sri Lanka through ODA in the past and said that he would like Japan to continue its assistance for peace and development" (Shinoda, 2011:14). When the war ended in 2009 it was victor's peace for the GoSL, it immediately started many programs in the North and East for sustainable positive peace.

Yasushi Akashi traveled no less than 18 times to Sri Lanka since he was appointed the special envoy for peace visited the internally displaced person in Vavuniya and commented that Sri Lanka is coping the humanitarian situation with tenacity and sincerity (*Daily News*, June 10, 2009). In addition Japan has provided the largest concessionary loan packages to Sri Lanka. In year 2012, up to the time of writing this paper the 66 Billion Rupee loan has been granted, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Yen loan package to the country on highly concessionary terms (Embassy of Japan, Press release 2012).

#### **4 Conclusion**

Three years since the end of war, so-called experts locally and internationally are talking about failure of liberal peacebuilding in Sri Lanka or illiberal peace in Sri Lanka. These so-called experts on Sri Lanka also ignore the fact that many peacebuilding experts themselves have acknowledged, the inherent flaws of the liberal peacebuilding model, and why it had failed in many regions (Paris, 2004).

Lliberal peacebuilding model cannot be imposed without due consideration to local conditions. In Sri Lanka positive peace can be easily established through a hybrid model of peace governance. Since liberal institutions are already in place, next step should be the consideration of local context.

In 2012, Sri Lanka and Japan celebrate 60 years of bilateral relations. Unlike Sri Lanka's foreign relations with the west which has seen up and down trends from time to time, the 60 years relations with Japan has been always very cordial and friendly. There has never been a tense moment between the two nations. Perhaps it is due to the fact that the successive Japanese governments always worked with successive GoSL through peacebuilding diplomacy.

Therefore Japan's vital contribution to positive peacebuilding in Sri Lanka by being Sri Lanka's top ODA in the past two decades or so, has shown us true friendship. It has also recognized that Sri Lanka is working towards positive peace and sustainable development with its democratic form of government, liberal economy together with ownership of local society in peacebuilding in a manner of hybrid peace governance.

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